

Review of: "The Impact of Study Environment on Students' Academic Performance: An Experimental Research Study"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Thank you for allowing me to review the draft manuscript: *The Impact of Study Environment on Students' Academic Performance: An Experimental Research Study*.

I believe the authors have formulated a relevant study in the era of online learning. Such a study can make a meaningful contribution to the literature on learning, particularly online learning.

The draft manuscript draws the reader's attention to the noise variable that may not always be considered and interrogated in the online learning space. This situation appears in the literature despite numerous studies on the environmental influences on students' learning. While many students, following the COVID-19 pandemic, have returned to formal face-to-face classes, many modules/subjects are still offered online at many higher education institutions. This phenomenon may be attributed to the positive consequences that online learning brings to the students, the facilitators, and educational institutions (Mukhtar, Javed, Arooj, Sethi, 2020; Subhashni, 2008). Hence, the paper can significantly contribute to learning, particularly online learning in higher education institutions.

From my perspective, the authors should make several improvements to the draft manuscript for it to be publishable. My recommendations for improvements are:

- The title should be revised to mention the noise variable.
- A short yet clear problem statement should be presented. This is necessary to provide the research project's context, relevance, and aims. Currently, the problem is not apparent. Given this, I cannot decipher why the researcher executed this study. *However, I know the researcher does have a strong reason for conducting the study.* However,

this needs to be crystallised in the problem statement and what the researcher intends to resolve. I suggest the researcher contextualises the problem, describes the issue the study will address, puts forward what still needs to be discovered, and outlines the study's relevance and research objectives.

- The literature review is incomplete. Currently, *only one* study is elaborated on in the draft. However, many studies can be referenced in this regard, and inferences can be made on how it pertains to this particular study. The researcher should provide a discussion of the literature that has been reviewed on noise and how it influences learning and online learning to establish the reviewer's position in the existing field of scholarship on the topic.
- The literature review section can also be strengthened by providing a description of internal and external noise. Then, delve into a brief discussion on external noise, which is the focus of the study. In addition, describe the era of online learning at higher education institutions within the context of the coronavirus 2019 pandemic and after that.
- I suggest the authors provide a section/heading in the manuscript titled: "Context of the study". It should provide information about the research site (the higher education institution and their student profile). Such a backdrop will introduce the reader to a framework for understanding the research question, methods, and findings.
- The researchers should provide a few sentences for locating the study in a positivistic paradigm. An explanation to conceptualise the positivistic paradigm should be provided, and a justification for choosing it for this study.
- Details relating to the sample's composition and why the sample is spread across different faculties and programmes should be presented. The contents in the table are not sufficient.

My best wishes to the researcher in reworking the current document. I look forward to your revised version of this interesting and relevant topic.

Warm regards